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UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 22 JEDDAH 000061

SIPDIS

G/TIP, G, INL, DRL, PRM, NEA/ARP, USAID

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [KTIP](#) [KCRM](#) [PHUM](#) [KWMN](#) [SMIG](#) [KFRD](#) [ASEC](#) [PREF](#) [ELAB](#)

SA

SUBJECT: SAUDI ARABIA: CONTRIBUTION TO THE NINTH ANNUAL
TRAFFICKING IN PERSONS (TIP) REPORT

REF: 08STATE132759

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SUMMARY & RECOMMENDATIONS

11. (SBU) KEY POINTS:

--Saudi Arabia continues to be a destination country for foreign domestic workers, primarily women from East and South Asia, who are either trafficked into the Kingdom or whose treatment after arriving in the country qualifies them as victims of trafficking.

--In addition, Saudi Arabia continues to be a destination for trafficked children mostly from Yemen and Africa who enter the country through the porous Yemen-Saudi border and usually engage in street begging, other low-wage work, or occasional criminal activity.

--A significant number of men, the majority coming from Asia, become trafficked when their company sponsors hold their passports and fail to provide an exit-visa while underpaying or entirely failing to pay the agreed upon salary.

--The Government of Saudi Arabia does not fully comply with the minimum standards for the elimination of trafficking as set forth in the U.S. Trafficking Victims Protection Act.

--There are strong labor laws on the books and Saudi Arabia

is signatory to many important human rights treaties aimed at preventing trafficking.

--However, there is little enforcement of many of these laws and almost no coordination within the government to ensure that basic rights of individuals are protected.

--As of February, 2009 there is no comprehensive anti-trafficking law on the books, although in 2008 the government made progress on developing such a law.

-Prosecutions remain a particularly problematic area in Saudi Arabia's struggle to improve its TIP response. There are no reported cases of non-payment issues or other types of abuses punished through jail time.

--Restrictions on importing labor and fines are rarely enforced.

--In many cases back-payment to trafficking victims is not provided in full or at all.

--Due to lack of law enforcement data, Post cannot assess whether the number of trafficking victims has decreased during the reporting period or whether the government has made or monitored efforts to investigate, prosecute, convict and sentence traffickers.

--Victims are often treated as criminals in the justice system, outreach education does not appear widespread, victim after-care is extremely limited, and prevention measures almost entirely absent.

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--The de facto system in the Kingdom encourages trafficking victims to enter deportation facilities, discourages participation in the judicial process, and rarely makes a victim whole in the end.

-Saudi officials have continually downplayed the extent of TIP and at other times denied the problem entirely or used the term to describe unrelated problems.

12. (SBU) RECOMMENDATION:

For these reasons, Post recommends Saudi Arabia should remain a Tier 3 country in the annual TIP report.

Progress on the following elements would help move the country towards Tier 2 Watch List status:

- 1) Enactment of an amendment to Saudi Arabia's Labor Law extending the protections of that law to foreign domestic workers.
- 2) Enactment of a comprehensive anti-TIP law criminalizing trafficking in persons.
- 3) Provision of current law enforcement data related to anti-trafficking efforts before the annual TIP report is published in June.
- 4) Implementation of serious penalties for all levels of trafficking perpetrators.
- 5) Provision of shelter and proper after-care and counseling for victims.
- 6) Evidence of prevention and educational outreach, including public awareness programs.
- 7) Improvements in the efficiency of the judicial system or at least provide incentives for victims to remain in country for the duration of their cases.

8) Greater SAG transparency so the U.S. and other concerned entities are fully aware of anti-trafficking efforts.

Any or all of the above actions would be a major step towards a more favorable ranking. END SUMMARY & RECOMMENDATION.

13. (U) Point of Contact (POC) is Political/Economic Officer Joseph Livingston at Consulate General Jeddah, (email: livingstonjs@state.gov, phone: 966-2-667-0080 ext. 4227, fax: 966-2-669-2991). One officer spent approximately 75% of his time for four weeks preparing this report cable.

ANSWERS TO TIP QUESTIONS

14. (SBU) TIP QUESTION 23 (A-E):

23A. Sources of TIP information include the Saudi government, sending-country diplomats in Riyadh and Jeddah, the National

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Society for Human Rights, labor lawyers, intellectuals and academics, publications from international human rights organizations, and local and international press. Saudi government sources include the Human Rights Commission, the Ministry of Labor, the Ministry of the Interior, and the Ministry of Justice. Some information is derived from roundtables held with sending country diplomats in Riyadh in November 2008 and with consular welfare and labor officers in Jeddah in January 2009. Reliable sources were able to produce only scant numerical data. Information from the 2008 TIP reporting cable was used when no new sources of information were available.

23B. Saudi Arabia is a country of destination for internationally trafficked men, women, and children. According to a December, 2008 Washington Post article, Saudi Arabia has 8 million foreign laborers in a country of 28 million people. Approximately 25 percent of the workers are domestic servants. Foreign labor is widely used throughout Saudi Arabia, and trafficking occurs in all parts of the country. There are no reliable numbers or estimates for either labor or sex trafficking cases in the aggregate, although consulates and embassies of sending-countries keep statistics on their own populations. Al-Arabiyya reported that the Indonesian Embassy received 1,300 complaints from its nationals in 2008 including many complaints of unpaid salaries. There is no evidence that the Saudi government or any other organization keeps numerical data on Saudi trafficking offenders. There has been no major change during this reporting cycle with respect to countries sending labor to Saudi Arabia.

23C. The main populations targeted by traffickers are women and children, although significant numbers of men are also victims. Female trafficking victims, particularly those employed as domestic workers, are often victims of fraud and deception. These women typically come to Saudi Arabia through employment recruiting agencies, sometimes legally but other times using falsified documents that misrepresent their ages or under contractual agreements which are changed upon arrival in the Kingdom and which they are forced to sign despite new terms to which they did not originally agree.

Another common trafficking situation for domestic workers occurs when the employing family withholds wages and refuses to return the worker's passport or obtain an exit visa. There are many reports of women told they must work a year or longer before they will receive payment. This is justified by employers as a means of preventing domestic workers from running away before the contract is fulfilled. There are reports of women being forced to work after their contracts have expired. Some women report having been threatened with physical or sexual abuse as a means of forcing them to work. Women have reported being locked inside houses and prevented

from having any communication with the outside world. In some cases women have been permitted to leave the house only under immediate supervision. A woman can be made to understand by her sponsor that if she attempts to run away, she will end up returning home without salary/monetary compensation.

During a November 2008 visit to the Philippine Embassy-run shelter by a U.S. delegation, one woman described how she had

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leapt from a window and hidden in a garbage can to escape her abusive employer. Women who run away are often picked up by the police and may be detained for improper dress or for the offense of running away from a sponsor. Other cases of debt bondage force women to work in order to pay back the fees associated with their hiring.

The July 2008, Human Rights Watch Report, "As If I am not Human" includes detailed accounts from two years of field work in Saudi Arabia and in sending countries (interviewing returned or repatriated victims). The report confirms many of the misfortunes that befall domestic workers in Saudi Arabia.

Trafficking of men occurs when employers -- sometimes larger companies but more likely smaller ones that slip under the radar -- withhold pay and passports and deny exit visas to prevent the employees from leaving. Debt bondage occurs with men as well when they are forced to repay recruitment fees. In December 2008 regional media reported that 54 Sri Lankan workers (52 of whom were men) returned to their country alleging employer abuse including non-payment of wages. There are many accounts of employers switching contracts and of employers paying below contractually agreed upon rates.

Trafficking problems also occur among the significant number of people who overstay their Hajj and Umrah pilgrimage visas in order to find work. These individuals are not allowed to work legally and are sometimes exploited by gangs that coerce them into prostitution and begging. Due to their illegal status, these individuals are also highly vulnerable to non-payment since there is no redress for abuse. Sources indicate, however, that these individuals are more able to leave the country easily since they do not require a sponsor's permission and can retain possession of their passports.

Children are often trafficked into Saudi Arabia from Yemen and from countries in Africa including Chad, Somalia, and Sudan. According to diplomatic sources, some children travel by land to Somalia and then to Yemen by ship, from where they are brought to Saudi Arabia by gangs or organized criminals for the purpose of becoming beggars or engaging in other low-wage work. Some Yemeni families have been complicit in trafficking their own children into Saudi Arabia, mainly for economic reasons. Recent NGO involvement including UNICEF program work is beginning to address this issue on the Yemen side of the border, but the problem is still widespread.

In addition, there have been media reports of trafficking in Saudi Arabia for prostitution, but reticence in local media and among government officials to recognize and address this problem makes it difficult to assess. Apparently "temporary marriage" is one manifestation of the problem. Temporary marriage is legal in Saudi Arabia under Sharia law, although not necessarily socially acceptable. Such marriages can take place by mutual consent between two individuals and sometimes involve "matchmakers" who charge "dowries" to men to marry women whom they are contractually obligated to see for only short periods of time. Some believe that one of the main purposes of these marriages, which absolve the man of financial responsibility for the woman, is to provide another

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avenue for men to pursue sex outside their primary marriages, given that sexual relationships outside marriage are illegal under Islamic law. The "temporary marriages" are often kept secret from family, including the man's wife if he has one. Media in the past have suggested that women brought into these marriages are sometimes foreigners from labor source countries. The exchange of money for the marriages may be considered akin to prostitution. The practice, particularly if it involves foreigners from developing countries who may not speak Arabic or understand the agreements into which they are entering, makes these individuals vulnerable to trafficking.

23D.) Female foreign domestic workers are the group most vulnerable to trafficking in the Kingdom due to the degree of control a family employer has over the victim's movements. Saudi law and culture consider the home to be extremely private. As a result, homes are generally beyond the reach law enforcement, increasing the power a family can exert over an employee. Passports are often held by the family sponsor and freedom of movement is severely restricted for many domestics (Saudi women and girls can also be subject to restrictions on their freedom of movement). Domestic workers are most vulnerable to physical and sexual abuse, or the threat of these, being used to deter them from leaving. The 2008 Human Rights Watch report, "As if I am not Human" details with case evidence many of the factors that lead to the vulnerability of domestic workers.

Another particularly vulnerable group is children, especially Yemenis and Africans in Yemen, who often find themselves trafficked across the porous Yemen-Saudi border by gangs, in some cases with the collusion of impoverished Yemeni families. Media reports and trusted sources document that these children then become beggars for organized gangs or are involved in other low paid work in Jeddah, Riyadh, and other parts of the Kingdom. Some of the children are picked up by Saudi law enforcement officers and repatriated to Yemen or their respective countries. Some children have been trafficked into Saudi Arabia more than once. NGO program work and several rehabilitation facilities in Yemen are improving this situation somewhat.

23E. Traffickers and exploiters include businesses of all sizes, families, recruitment agencies (both in sending countries and in Saudi Arabia), and gangs and organized criminal elements, depending on the kind of victim. Male workers are typically trafficked by companies or recruitment agencies that switch contracts, refuse to pay, or underpay the employee, or abuse the individual while holding the passport and refusing an exit visa. Yemeni and African children are trafficked by Yemeni gangs and families and then brought into Saudi Arabia. Domestic workers are trafficked by both employment agencies and more often by a family that refuses to allow the woman to leave the house, withholds her passport or refuses to provide an exit-visa, while often under-paying or not paying her at all. False documents are often used as a means of trafficking under-age domestic laborers into Saudi Arabia. Traffickers are often based in the destination country, but accounts of trafficking by source-side recruitment agencies are common. There are no accounts of tourism agencies or marriage brokers being

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involved in trafficking in Saudi Arabia.

15. (SBU) Answers to TIP Question 24 (A-E)

24A. The government acknowledges that trafficking is a problem in the country as evidenced by recent workshops for judicial personnel, a law that prohibits some forms of trafficking, and its work on a comprehensive anti-trafficking law. However, the government often denies that certain kinds of trafficking occur, particularly cases involving sexual exploitation. The government typically reacts defensively to international pressure or negative media attention, and

almost universally downplays the severity of the trafficking problem. Officials often confound trafficking with smuggling, where an individual willingly enters the country, or with the problem of Hajj or Umrah pilgrims overstaying their visas to work illegally.

A story in the December 12, 2008 edition of the Manila Times detailed an account of 15 Saudi sheikhs serving as Hajj guides who were blacklisted from their work after 105 of the pilgrims in their care stayed in the Kingdom illegally. Despite this clearly being a case of smuggling, since the individuals in question chose to stay to work illegally, a Saudi official was quoted as saying, "This act is tantamount to human trafficking for the pilgrims violated their umrah visa and stayed behind illegally in Saudi Arabia." This is an example of the frequent tendency of Saudi officials to incorrectly define human trafficking as any illegal movement of people.

24B. No single entity serves as the lead agency for Saudi government anti-trafficking efforts. The U.S. Mission works most often with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to address trafficking issues. Other Saudi government agencies involved in anti-trafficking include the Ministries of Labor, Justice, Social Affairs, and Interior, and the Human Rights Commission. The latter appears to be devoting more resources to trafficking, but has not claimed a leading role. The advisory Shura Council and the Council of Ministers are the key players in any legislation on trafficking. The Shura reportedly passed major anti-trafficking legislation in late November 2008 that now awaits approval from the Council of Ministers.

24C. Limits on the government's ability to address trafficking include a lack of coordination between government bodies and the absence of comprehensive anti-trafficking law, although media (Gulf News 11/27/2008) and government sources indicate the Council of Ministers has a Shura-approved draft law under consideration. Without legislation, there remains a near total absence of set penalties for violations. Saudi officials remain reticent to fully admit the range and scope of TIP occurring within the Kingdom. Corruption is a significant problem at all levels of government in Saudi Arabia, which can inhibit proper administration of justice for TIP offenses. The government has the financial resources to aid victims, but does not appear to have made anti-trafficking programs a funding priority. Laws in the Kingdom are often not implemented and there is often a disconnect between the legislating bodies in Riyadh and local law enforcement agencies. Many trafficking incidents are

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difficult to confront because they occur behind closed doors involving family sponsors and domestic workers.

24D. The government does not systematically monitor its anti-trafficking efforts to an adequate degree. The Ministry of Labor supposedly maintains a database of abusive employers who are prohibited from recruiting new foreign workers, but foreign embassies complain that the government has not implemented the blacklisting system. Interior Ministry officials ran through a litany of anecdotal cases during a Nov 2008 meeting with a U.S. delegation. The incidents were not clearly trafficking but were mostly cases of severe physical or sexual abuse. None of the officials who met with the delegation could provide statistics or evidence of proper monitoring.

In past years SAG officials from the Ministries of Labor, Interior, Foreign Affairs, and Justice, in addition to the Human Rights Commission, have been forthcoming in providing some information and documentation about trafficking in persons, but would not release law enforcement data (it is not clear if such information exists with respect to trafficking).

The Saudi government shows some awareness of the need to increase and improve monitoring, but the sluggishness of implementing new procedures along with the lack of transparency make it difficult to assess realistically whether and when monitoring will be fully implemented. The government has not reported this information publicly, privately, or through regional or international organizations.

16. (SBU) Answers to TIP Question 25 (A-D)

25A. Saudi Arabia does not yet have a comprehensive anti-trafficking law. Officials mentioned the existence of draft anti-trafficking legislation during the November 2008 visit of Ambassador Lagon, and at an anti-trafficking conference in January 2009. However, other proposed laws such as a domestic labor law have been rumored for years without ever appearing, and it is not possible to say whether an anti-trafficking law is near enactment.

Following is a list of laws and treaties on the books in Saudi Arabia relevant to trafficking. The fact they are mentioned here does not imply anything with respect to implementation. Most of these laws are only partially enforced while others seem to be ignored completely. There is little monitoring and evaluation to insure compliance:

-- The original labor law is the Saudi Labor and Workmen Law of 1969, which prohibits forced labor and covers the rights of foreign workers, with some exceptions including domestic helpers. A document provided by the government entitled "The Government of Saudi Arabia Facing the Challenge of Human Trafficking: Legal Frameworks, Preventative Measures, and Continued Commitments" states that the Labor Law does not discriminate between Saudi and foreign workers with regard to rights and responsibilities.

-- A new labor law was issued on September 27, 2005 and entered into force March 25, 2006, which protects the rights

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of workers in the private sector, but again, exempts domestic workers, which constitute the group of workers most vulnerable to trafficking. The 2005 Labor Law supersedes the Labor and Workmen Law. The text of the 2005 Labor Law can be found online at [http://www.mol.gov.sa/mol site/labor law.pdf](http://www.mol.gov.sa/mol%20site/labor%20law.pdf).

-- Additional measures for preventing abuse and violation of workers' rights include Ministry of Labor Resolution No. 738/1 from July 4, 2004, which prohibits all forms of TIP, such as the selling of visas, obtaining remuneration for the appointment of workers, receiving money in return for exit/re-entry visas or for work and residence permits, violation of the terms of contracts, inhumane employment, inhumane and immoral treatment, or employment and exploitation of children and their use in begging. The ruling specifies penalties for any of these violations, by prohibiting the violator from importing workers for a five-year period, in addition to any other penalties in related regulations.

There are additional penalties for repeat offenders which include banning the violator from ever bringing in workers. Since many businesses are dependent on foreign-workers, this penalty)- if actually enforced)- would make it impossible for culpable businesses to operate.

-- Council of Ministers Resolution No. 166 provides additional measures for preventing abuse and violation of foreign workers' rights, including:

- The relationship between employers and their employees shall be on a contractual basis, but not through sponsorship.
- Foreign workers shall have the right to keep their passports and those of their dependents.

- Foreign workers are granted the right to contact the Directorate of Passports to obtain residence permits and visas or exit/re-entry visas for family members.

- Foreign workers are granted the right of movement inside the Kingdom as long as they possess valid residence permits, and the right to attend to matters like buying and renting property.

- Concerned parties are to be firm in imposing the stated penalties on any business owner who is delinquent in renewing the residence permit of the foreign workers he/she employs or who may otherwise cause them legal or monetary harm, or who delays paying their salaries and benefits.

A number of diplomatic contacts have commented that they know about Resolution 166 but have never seen it and have never heard of any foreign worker successfully pursuing a claim under it.

-- Ministry of Labor Resolution No. 2503 of December 22, 2004 proposes the establishment of a new directorate under the Ministry's Under Secretary for Workers' Affairs, to be named the "Directorate for the Affairs of Foreign Workers," with the mandate to provide support services to foreign workers.

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- Domestic workers, comprising the majority of foreign workers in Saudi Arabia, are not included in the original Saudi Labor and Workmen Law or in the new 2005 Labor Law. According to the SAG, to address this gap, Ministry of Labor Resolution No. 2215 issued on March 24, 2005 ordered the establishment of special regulations for domestic workers, and formed a new committee to take over this task, headed by the Under Secretary for Planning and Development at the Ministry of Labor (MOL). New legislation on domestic workers was said to have been developed over the course of 2006 and to be under evaluation by the Council of Ministers, usually one of the final stages in establishing a new law. At present, there is no evidence as to whether this committee is still operational and there is still no law on the books relating to domestic workers. In the absence of such a law, disputes between domestic workers and employers, or complaints of mistreatment, are referred to regional and provincial authorities and police departments. More serious assaults including physical abuse and sexual harassment are criminal acts punishable through the criminal justice system, and are processed through the Sharia courts.

In a November 2008 meeting with a U.S. delegation, MOL officials noted that they are considering abolishing the current sponsorship system for migrant workers in the Kingdom, but had no date in mind for doing so. The sponsorship system enables sponsors to hold workers' passports and restrict workers' movements. A November 19, 2008 report in the Saudi Alwatan newspaper confirmed the intention of the Human Rights Commission President to replace the current personal sponsorship system with one in which companies would be the sole sponsors of labor.

In October 2007, media sources (Arab News) reported that the Ministry of Labor set new conditions for the recruitment of housemaids and drivers and also agreed to issue replacement visas before those presently holding these jobs leave the Kingdom on exit-only visas. According to the conditions, applicants for visas to bring in maids and drivers must have the necessary financial capability to support servants and must prove their need for servants.

Part 10 of the 2005 Labor Law protects and regulates youth employment in the private sector. The law prohibits employment of youth under 15. For those between the ages of 15 and 18 years, the law sets strict rules and conditions for their employment. Royal Decree No. 13000 set the minimum age of camel jockeys at 18 years.

Sharia law prohibits prostitution.

International Treaties and Agreements:

Pursuant to Articles (70) and (71) of the Kingdom's Basic Law of Governance, international conventions, treaties and agreements become automatically part of local Saudi law as of the date of their release. The Kingdom is party to the following international conventions, treaties and agreements related to human trafficking:

- The UN Convention for the Suppression of the Traffic in Persons and of the Exploitation of the Prostitution of Others

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(December 2, 1949).

- Fifteen agreements of the International Labor Organization (ILO) including ILO Convention 29 on Forced or Mandatory Labor (15 June 1978) and ILO Convention 182 on the Elimination of Worst Forms of Child Labor (8 October 2001).

- The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (December 18, 1979). Saudi Arabia acceded August 28, 2000.

- The Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman, or Degrading Treatment or Punishment. Saudi Arabia acceded August 7, 1997 and signed August 5, 2001.

- The International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination. Saudi Arabia acceded August 17, 1997.

- Convention on the Rights of the Child (November 20, 1989). Saudi Arabia has considered joining the two optional protocols to the Convention on the Rights of the Child, the Optional Protocol on the Sale of Children, Child Prostitution and Child Pornography and the Optional Protocol on the Involvement of Children in Armed Conflict, but to date has not signed or ratified either protocol.

- The 1926 Slavery Convention. Slavery was officially abolished in Saudi Arabia in 1962.

- Saudi Arabia has been an active supporter of the UN Working Group on Contemporary Forms of Slavery since its formation in 1974.

- The UN Convention Against Transnational Organized Crime. Saudi Arabia signed December 12, 2000 and ratified January 18, 2005.

- The Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, supplementing the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime. Saudi Arabia signed on December 10, 2002 and ratified on July 20, 2007. Upon signature Saudi Arabia declared that the Kingdom prohibits trafficking in persons for the purpose referred to in paragraph (a) of Article 3 of the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress, and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children. However, the Kingdom made reservations regarding provisions in the Protocol requiring State Parties to consider measures to provide employment, educational and training opportunities to trafficking victims," and to consider adopting measures that permit victims of trafficking in persons to remain in their territories, temporarily or permanently, in appropriate cases.

- The Protocol against the Smuggling of Migrants by Land, Sea and Air, supplementing the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime. Saudi Arabia signed December 10, 2002 and ratified July 20, 2007.

- The GCC Unified Law for Eradication of Trafficking in Persons in the GCC is a draft prepared by a team of experts

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in March 2006 reflecting joint efforts in GCC countries to resolve the issue of TIP. The draft includes definitions similar to those adopted by the UN protocol of trafficking in persons; sanctions for various types of violations; and the formation of national committees for the eradication of trafficking. It is not clear that the GCC has made any further progress on this proposed law.

The quasi-governmental National Society for Human Rights (NSHR) issued a report in May 2007 saying that trafficking regulations and laws issued by the Ministry of Labor and other officials were not put into effect and that there is an urgent need for a comprehensive solution to put an end to such violations. The NSHR noted that government officials did not pay much attention to this report. The NSHR also noted a shortage of staff in labor commissions for settlement of labor disputes; the commissions act as private courts to consider labor cases and settle them in accordance with labor laws. The Saudi Human Rights Commission (HRC) also acknowledged that the Kingdom needs more labor commissions. In general, there is a lack of application and implementation of labor law.

25B.) Saudi Arabia does not have a law specifically prohibiting TIP for sexual exploitation. Sharia law prohibits prostitution and rape, and Saudi authorities have asserted that any trafficking for sexual purposes can be dealt with under Sharia. However the absence of an anti-trafficking law that addresses sexual exploitation makes it possible for victims to be treated as criminals under a strict application of Sharia.

25C.) The following laws set forth some of the penalties that can be imposed for labor trafficking. However, Saudi courts do not operate under a system of precedent, and in practice many outcomes are based on the individual decisions of judges. Penalties for most trafficking crimes are not clearly defined in Saudi law, and Sharia continues to dominate the practices of criminal court judges:

-- Ministry of Labor Resolution No. 738/1 of July 4, 2004 prohibits all forms of TIP and outlines the penalties for violations. Penalties are civil and not criminal. TIP offenses covered under Resolution 738/1 include the selling of visas, obtaining remuneration for the appointment of workers, receiving money in return for exit/re-entry visas, and for work and residence permits, violation of the terms of contracts, inhumane employment, inhumane and immoral treatment, employment and exploitation of children and their use in begging. The Resolution specifies that the penalty for any violation is a five-year prohibition on bringing in foreign workers, in addition to any other penalties in related regulations. There are additional penalties for repeat offenders which include permanently banning the violator from sponsoring foreign workers.

According to the Ministry of Labor, the 2005 labor law imposes additional penalties for violations of Resolution 738/1 ranging from 5 years to life imprisonment and prohibition from recruitment of foreign workers.

-- In September 2007, media sources (Arab News) reported on

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Directive 1/111 issued by the Minister of Labor on January 29, 2007, which states that employers proven to have delayed paying employees' wages for more than two consecutive months are prohibited from recruiting new employees from abroad for a period of twelve months. Employees whose wages have been delayed for more than three consecutive months have the right

to file a complaint with the Labor Office to have their sponsorship transferred to another sponsor. Under the terms of the Directive, in such a situation, an employee would not be bound to the normal one-year wait before becoming eligible for sponsorship transfer and would be absolved from obtaining the employer's consent for a transfer. The employer remains responsible for meeting all obligations to the employee and once the employee's sponsorship is transferred, neither the employee nor the new sponsor is obliged to financially compensate the former sponsor. According to the Directive, companies violating its terms can face a fine of USD 133.33 to USD 800.00, multiplied by the number of employees whose rights were violated. Similarly, the penalty for not paying a contractually agreed upon end of service award is a fine of USD 533.33 to USD 1,333.33 for each affected employee. According to the Minister of Labor, in reality there is no blacklist of employers who violate laws, but each can be penalized through fines and by banning foreign recruitment.

There is no evidence the government has taken any action to implement this Directive, despite the fact that non-payment of wages (especially for 2 or 3 months) is extremely common. Post has seen no reports that sponsorships have been transferred under the Directive, and it is unclear that workers are aware of the Directive, or whether it applies to domestic employees, who are normally excluded from coverage under labor laws.

The Labor Ministry, the Labor Offices, and Commissions for Settlement of Labor Disputes are responsible for following up and penalizing those who violate labor laws. Post does not have quantitative data on the number of convicted labor traffickers, but there have been a number of high profile cases involving labor abuses and possible instances of trafficking. Many of these cases did not appear to result in any investigation, prosecution, conviction and sentencing of either employment recruiting agencies or individual sponsors. This failure could be a reflection of the fact that current labor law does not cover domestic laborers, which are the subjects of most of the highlighted cases.

In February 2008, media sources (Arab News) reported that a Sri Lankan maid working in the Kingdom died in October 2005 due to malnutrition and had not been paid for the duration of her work in Saudi Arabia. The maid's sponsor was arrested, along with his wife, shortly after the cause of death was determined. The couple was later released in an attempt to receive compensation for the maid's family of her unpaid salary. The maid's body remained in Saudi Arabia for a year following her death until the Sri Lankan Bureau of Foreign Employment paid for repatriation. The report said the maid's mother received a diamond necklace as partial compensation, although its value did not fulfill the sponsor's full obligation for the unpaid salary.

In January 2008, media sources (Arab News) reported on a Sri
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Lankan maid who had worked in Saudi Arabia since 1999 without pay. The report said her Saudi sponsor had agreed to pay USD 11,520 in back wages. The maid was to return to Sri Lanka. The report did not mention criminal charges against the sponsor.

In October 2008, media reports announced a draft law the government said would create a new labor recruitment system whereby larger companies would supply labor (including domestic workers) instead of the current system of individual sponsors. The draft law would also mandate regular salary payment and an eight hour day. The current status of this proposed law is unknown.

25D. According to Sharia, the penalty for rape can include death, lashes and jail time. However, under Sharia penalties also have been imposed on the victims of sexual crimes. A comprehensive anti-trafficking law does not exist to clearly

spell out the procedures and punishments for cases of trafficking involving rape and sexual abuse.

25E. The Saudi government has made no information available regarding prosecutions of trafficking violations, and it is not likely that records are kept on trafficking as a distinct crime. The government has an endemic problem with collecting and reporting statistical data and information and the government lacks transparency. The government does not prosecute cases for "trafficking", but only for some types of abuse associated with trafficking such as non-payment of wages and prostitution. With respect to labor trafficking, several diplomatic sources have been unable to produce even a single anecdotal example of a prosecution for non-payment of wages including fines, labor export bans, or jail time. During a November, 2008 meeting between Ministry of Interior Officials and G/TIP Director Ambassador Lagon, the only cases brought to light were monetary and criminal sanctions for extreme examples of physical abuse. There are no prosecutions related to the holding of passports or denying exit visas since this practice is allowable under existing labor law for all non-technical workers in the Kingdom. Saudi law does not specify penalties for most trafficking crimes and with the absence of sentencing guidelines, judges have complete authority with respect to handling non-payment situations. Sources confirm that the most victims can hope for is to be paid back wages, something that rarely occurs, and victims often settle for partial payment or none at all simply for the right to return to their home countries.

25F. The government has made limited efforts to provide specialized training for officials in how to recognize, investigate, and prosecute instances of trafficking. In November 2008 and February 2007, U.S. delegations discussed TIP issues at meetings and roundtable discussions with officials from the Ministries of Labor, Social Affairs, Interior, Justice, Religious Affairs, Education, and the Human Rights Commission. These discussions demonstrated somewhat more openness on the issue, but could have been motivated by hope that conversation alone would lead to a better ranking in future reports.

The government is highly resistant to allowing international organizations to work in Saudi Arabia and makes it almost

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impossible for them to register as NGOs. This policy limits the possibility for cooperation and training with these entities. Local organizations face the same difficulty in registering as NGOs, which hampers their ability to meet and maintain funding. This limitation produces a situation where the government voice on trafficking is the prevailing one.

The government provides awareness and technical training to some employees from the agencies involved in TIP issues. There is no evidence as to the frequency or effectiveness of this training. It is also not clear who is eligible for the training or what department makes this determination. Prince Naif Arab University for Security Sciences, an Arab League-sponsored institution, has held an anti-trafficking workshop for three straight years. The January 2008 workshop was aimed at educating judges, prosecutors, and investigators and included speakers from the U.S and the UN as well as academics. It also included a discussion focusing on how trafficking violates Sharia principles and how Sharia can be used as an instrument against trafficking.

Officials from the Human Rights Commission, during a November 2008 meeting with U.S. officials, stated an interest in having U.S. personnel offer training to Saudis on trafficking victim identification.

25G. Saudi Arabia cooperates minimally with other governments in the investigation and prosecution of trafficking cases, usually doing so when sending-country consulate and embassy officials solicit assistance. Anecdotal evidence from

consular sources suggests that assistance is oriented towards securing an exit-visa and the return of the passport rather than assuring a fair and expedient judicial process. There is no evidence of any prosecutions resulting from this cooperation.

There is some level of cooperation between Saudi Arabia and the Government of Yemen in the prevention of human smuggling and the trafficking of children. The Saudis will often work with Yemeni and other diplomatic missions to facilitate deportation of children picked up in raids. In the past law enforcement has been known to pick up street children and send them to jail, but this practice is declining as police and other officials focus more on repatriating the children to Yemen or their home countries.

25H. The SAG has not reported receiving any requests to extradite persons charged with trafficking in other countries. To varying degrees, the SAG has cooperated on cases involving Saudis in the U.S. who have been accused of physically or sexually assaulting, killing, or not paying their domestic workers (usually third country nationals). The U.S. and Saudi Arabia do not have an extradition agreement. One case raised by the Saudi National Society for Human Rights in 2008 and 2009 is that of Humaidan Al-Turki, a Saudi national sentenced in 2006 to 28 years in Colorado prison on numerous charges including severe sexual abuse of his Indonesian maid. The Saudis continue to advocate for his release or transfer as he awaits another round of appeals in 2009.

25I. Despite movement towards a major anti-trafficking law

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in 2008-2009, some government officials continue to deny trafficking exists in Saudi Arabia or tend to downplay the extent of problems. Additionally government officials seem incapable or unwilling to fully accept the definition and criteria of all forms of labor and sex trafficking. This denial of the problem, the lack of prosecutions, and the slow progress on a comprehensive anti-trafficking law are evidence of a general tolerance of the existence of trafficking.

One example of government involvement in trafficking came to light in January 2009 when local media reported that a police officer was involved in the gang rape of an Indonesian runaway maid. The maid was apparently taken by the police to a rest house in Makkah where a large group of men abused and raped her. Reports said 46 men were arrested in relation to the case. It is usually only in extreme cases such as this that law enforcement and other government officials are held to account.

25J. There is little evidence that any individuals, official or otherwise, have been prosecuted for trafficking as a distinct crime. The government prosecutes severe abuses, but many instances of trafficking are not dealt with as criminal cases and administrative sanctions are extremely rare. Numerous reliable sources confirm that the buying and selling of visas for foreign workers in Saudi Arabia is a big business. Sources widely report that corruption is frequently present in the government, especially in the court system, a factor that can hinder the rights of trafficking victims. Post has no knowledge of any sanctions, criminal, civil, administrative, or other penalties that were placed on government officials for the crime of trafficking.

25K. Prostitution is illegal in Saudi Arabia, as is adultery. The punishment for these crimes can include death. The punishment for a non-married person found having sex is 80 lashes. Under Sharia, in order for capital punishment to apply, the accused must either confess or four witnesses must attest to the crime. Otherwise, the judge can decide to impose lesser punishments such as lashes or jail time. The penalty for a brothel owner/manager or a pimp or enforcers can be lashes or imprisonment. The SAG has raided brothels

and arrested managers, workers, and clients. There are cases where a female victim of sexual abuse or rape has been treated as a criminal. Known cases of prostitution are often rigorously enforced aided by the activities of the Mutawwaen (The Committee for the Promotion of Virtue and Prevention of Vice, or the Religious Police).

25L. This question is not applicable to Saudi Arabia. Saudi Arabia did not contribute forces to an international peacekeeping effort during the reporting period.

25M. There is no evidence to suggest that Saudi Arabia is a destination for sex tourism. It is not clear whether the country's sexual abuse laws have extraterritorial coverage to allow the prosecution of suspected sex tourists for crimes committed abroad. There are no known cases of any Saudis prosecuted or convicted for an offense occurring outside the country.

17. (SBU) Answers to TIP Question 26 (A-E)

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26A. The government rarely assists TIP victims or witnesses with shelter, access to legal, medical, and psychological services, or relief from deportation. Many victims taken into custody by the police are sent to deportation centers, which do not always provide safe conditions. A December 19 2008 Amnesty International report claimed that at least one detainee died at the Riyadh detention center after being denied medical care. In January 2008, it appeared that authorities sometimes put arrested child beggars in prison with adults, where they were in danger of being sexually abused or killed. Saudi diplomatic and Yemen-based sources assert that the situation has improved, such that most children now are not sent to jail, but are instead placed in juvenile centers run by the Ministry of Social Affairs, so they can be identified and repatriated.

26B. TIP abuse victims are sometimes treated at government hospitals, but only if they possess a residency permit. A person without a permit may not receive treatment at a public hospital. Private hospitals are not usually affordable for trafficking victims. The Ministry of Social Affairs maintains a shelter in Riyadh for foreign domestic workers, but a November 2008 visit by a U.S. delegation revealed that victims of physical and psychological abuse are unlikely to receive assistance. Sources indicate that the center is not open to women from outside Riyadh. The government processes many trafficking victims in deportation centers, which according to sending country diplomatic sources and the media are significantly overcrowded and unhealthy. The Philippines, Sri Lanka, and Indonesia have facilities for female victims in Jeddah and Riyadh. There are no similar facilities for male victims. There is no available information on the amount of money expended by the government to support the shelter in Riyadh.

26C. TIP victims are rarely treated at government and private hospitals, particularly because those without documentation cannot be assisted at government facilities and many of these individuals have fled without a passport in hand. The Ministry of Social Affairs has a shelter for foreign women and children in Riyadh, but it is not clear whether similar facilities exist in other cities. There is no available data on the amount of funds provided by the Saudi government for any type of services to trafficking victims. The embassies and consulates of the Philippines, Indonesia, and Sri Lanka maintain shelter space for women in Riyadh and Jeddah.

Many trafficking victims in the Kingdom are treated as criminals. This was emphasized at a round table of sending country labor and welfare officers in Jeddah in January 2009. An October 14, 2008 Amnesty International account claimed that poor African and Asian defendants who do not speak Arabic are not provided with translation in Arabic court

proceedings. Indigent defendants are not automatically provided with legal counsel.

26D. The government assists TIP victims on a limited basis by providing some women access to a shelter in Riyadh for short periods of time. Temporary shelter may be provided during the judicial process, but this often occurs at deportation centers that are reported to be dangerous and unsanitary. On

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some occasions when sponsors are found guilty, the SAG provides monetary compensation to TIP victims in lieu of court settlements to expedite the resolution of cases and the repatriation of foreign workers. The SAG will sometimes pay to transport TIP victims back to their home countries, but this is usually the responsibility of the sponsor. In other disputed cases, the sending country is left to shelter victims and pay for travel home. Domestic workers are particularly vulnerable and often receive reduced services because they are not protected under the 2005 Labor Law. The government has not provided permanent residency status or acceptable long-term relief from deportation to trafficking victims.

26E. The government provides a limited amount of shelter space for female victims in Riyadh. Meetings with officials of the shelter in November 2008 revealed that it is oriented only for those staying short term. There is no shelter or housing provided on a long-term basis to victims. A large number of victims are sent home through deportation centers. Government actions are oriented towards resolving cases quickly in whatever way possible and returning the victims to their home countries. Under these conditions, any efforts to rebuild victims' lives take place upon return to their home countries.

26F. The government tends to direct victims into deportation centers. Law enforcement agencies channel foreigners picked up in raids to these centers. However, Post has also heard reports this cycle that individuals are unable to go to deportation facilities unless they are picked up in a raid. Diplomatic sources claim it is often impossible for a victim to get sent or referred to a deportation center by going to a police station. In February 2009, local media sources reported that a large number of foreigners were camped out under a bridge in Jeddah waiting to be picked up in raids and sent to the deportation center. Media reported that a group of Indonesian workers went from the bridge to the Consulate of Indonesia and staged an illegal demonstration in order to be arrested by the police and sent to the deportation facility. Diplomatic sources confirm the encampment of workers under the bridge. The deportation facilities are not designed to provide long term care, are overcrowded, and lack basic health standards. A small number of victims receive shelter at either government or embassy/consulate run facilities.

According to a 2008 report in the Saudi newspaper Okaz, children are sometimes handled with more care. Children found on the street are sent to shelter houses for long-term care run by the Ministry of Social Affairs. Other accounts from trusted sources indicate that the Saudis are less likely to jail young victims than previously and now aim to repatriate them.

26G. The government does not have a comprehensive anti-trafficking law in place and there is no evidence that trafficking as a specific crime category is used for statistical purposes. The Philippines consulate confirms that it keeps detailed records of its cases, but it has not released these, and the statistics will only be relevant for the population actually interacting with the mission. King

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Fahd Security College in Riyadh produced a study in 2008 that found there are 83,000 street-children in the Kingdom working as beggars and involved in criminal activity. These children apparently work for gang leaders, most having come from Yemen. Many of these children are said to be originally from Asia and Africa. According to a 2008 article in Okaz, one study estimates that 94% of the street children are foreign born. In general, trafficking cases are mentioned anecdotally by sources including the government and never with respect to raw numbers or percentages. In general, there is speculation by outside human rights groups and academics that trafficking is endemic, particularly among domestic workers.

26H. The government investigates complaints filed with the Labor Offices and trafficking cases brought as criminal allegations, but there is no formal process for actively identifying trafficking victims in the Saudi legal, immigration, or social service systems. Law enforcement and social services may identify severe cases of worker abuse, but are not prepared to spot trafficking as a specific crime. Officials from the government's Human Rights Commission seemed interested during a November 2008 meeting with U.S. officials in receiving training on victim identification.

26I. A trafficking victim in the Kingdom who legally files a complaint will not usually be jailed or treated as a criminal, but sending-country diplomats acknowledge that some have been. Consular labor and welfare officers at a January 2009 roundtable indicated there are examples of forced confessions among trafficking victims and a tendency for traffickers to levy charges against victims, which are often believed by police and judges. If the victim is a runaway or an over-stayer or has otherwise violated visa conditions, the victim can be jailed or detained. Female victims in cases of rape and sexual abuse have been detained and sentenced. Yemeni and African children have been sent to jails, although they are more likely now to be sent to juvenile centers and repatriated. Police sometimes return foreigners to their sponsors or employers, despite the fact they may be vulnerable to additional abuse or reprisals. Police will sometimes respect the rights of the victim by contacting the relevant embassy and placing the foreigner into a shelter or hospital. Frequently the victim is transported to a deportation center, especially if picked up by the police in a raid.

26J. The government does not explicitly impede victims in the investigation and prosecution of trafficking. However, the tendency to send victims to overcrowded deportation facilities coupled with the slow pace of justice discourages individuals from pursuing their full rights in court, with many settling only for their right to return home, often penniless.

The government has claimed in the past that counseling, shelter, and legal assistance are available and that victims may file complaints through hotlines and walk-in offices at the Ministries of Labor, Interior, and Social Affairs, and the Human Rights Commission. However, diplomatic, academic, and human rights sources are not able to point to real examples of where these services have been provided. It has

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also been reported in previous years that the government advertises these services through television and print media as well as brochures which are distributed to foreign workers coming to the KSA, but the evidence does not confirm that these practices are usually implemented.

Legal recourse is available to some victims, but domestic workers are exempted from labor laws, and therefore often do not have access to the justice system. One academic doing primary research on domestic workers in Saudi Arabia and in sending countries told post in January 2009 that she could not point to a single example of a domestic worker being

provided the means to raise a complaint in the court system. Many sources report lengthy and costly bureaucratic and legal delays.

Often, Saudi sponsors wait out a complaint seeking back pay because they know that without employment a foreigner cannot afford to pursue a legal claim through the courts for a lengthy period of time. If a victim follows the case through, restitution may be possible. However, workers often accept offers to settle claims for far less than the contractually agreed upon rate of pay in order to return home.

26K. The government claims to have made extensive efforts to provide specialized training for government officials in learning how to recognize, investigate, and prosecute instances of trafficking. In a November 2008 meeting between the Saudi Human Rights Commission and a U.S. delegation, officials expressed interest in providing human rights training to those working in schools and police forces, but there is no evidence that such training has occurred during the reporting cycle.

The only confirmed TIP training during the reporting period was the third annual anti-trafficking workshop in January 2009 at Prince Naif University for the Security Sciences in Riyadh aimed at educating Saudi judges, prosecutors, and investigators about trafficking. The workshop included foreign and Saudi lecturers on topics ranging from trafficking in Africa, Europe, and the United States to the relationship between Sharia law and trafficking. The U.S. was invited to participate in this workshop and arranged a presentation by Post's TIP officer on trafficking definitions, U.S. policy on TIP, and specific TIP challenges facing Saudi Arabia and the Middle East.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs sponsored a TIP workshop attended by the quasi-governmental National Society for Human Rights during the previous reporting period. There is no indication that any local or national law enforcement and justice personnel are receiving education on TIP other than through these sporadic workshops.

In 2007 The U.S. and Saudi Arabia discussed possible cooperation in establishing a series of TIP training courses. However, there has been no movement from either side towards creating such courses.

Questions related to government training for Saudi diplomatic missions overseas and statistics on assistance they provide to trafficking victims are not applicable.

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26L. This question is not applicable as Saudi Arabia is not a significant source country for trafficking victims.

26M. UNICEF has worked with the Saudi government to address child-related TIP issues in the Kingdom. UNICEF and Saudi efforts have focused on the primarily Yemeni children trafficked to Saudi Arabia for begging and low wage labor. With the help of UNICEF, the Saudis have improved their system for processing children involved in begging rings. Usually the child is brought to a shelter, given counseling and medical care, and may be registered to provide a record for recognizing repeat victims. Media sources (Arab News) reported in November 2007 that Saudi Arabia signed 15 agreements worth \$242 million to establish educational, technical, vocational, health and infrastructure projects in Yemen, which should aid efforts to reduce the motivation for Yemeni families to sell their children to beg in the Kingdom.

Work by UNICEF and NGOs on the Yemeni side of the border is reducing the supply of potentially trafficked children by educating families against the practice and through rehabilitation of those returning.

UNICEF indicated in past reporting cycles that the Saudi

Arabia-Yemen relationship can serve as a model for Saudi cooperation with other countries with which it must work to combat TIP. The SAG and Yemen have a draft MOU and draft Plan of Action on their joint efforts to combat this issue.

18. (SBU) Answers to TIP Question 27(A-G)

27A. - The Saudi government claims to run anti-trafficking information and education campaigns. The government says these campaigns target the public as well as government officials themselves. The government occasionally uses print media to educate the public about workers' rights and TIP. The Ministry of Labor produces a booklet in Arabic, English, and some source country languages which is supposed to be provided to foreign embassies in Riyadh, Saudi embassies abroad, ports of entry, and all foreign workers with information on the responsibilities of employers, the rights of employees, and how workers can seek help and assistance. However, it is not clear whether this literature is widely distributed or through what channels. Additionally the Saudi press, which is regulated by the government, covers stories of worker abuse extensively, but does not usually refer to these situations as trafficking.

The Human Rights Commission also said the SAG will soon begin distributing pamphlets specifically explaining laws concerning housemaids and drivers, though no date for this has been announced. The absence of significant revisions or additions to the labor law to protect the rights of female domestic workers could be delaying this project.

The Ministry of Labor has 37 offices throughout the country that adjudicate employee complaints, and the Human Rights Commission has a walk-in office where employees can register grievances. The government uses print media to encourage foreign workers to register complaints with the Ministry of Labor. However, complaints must be submitted in Arabic, and source country embassies say many foreign workers are

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illiterate even in their native languages and cannot understand Arabic let alone write the script. Most workers cannot afford the transportation costs or time off to file a complaint in person, are afraid to complain, or are discouraged by the Ministry's long bureaucratic delays and lack of enforcement.

Source country embassies complain that the government has not seriously instituted the system of blacklisting sponsors who do not adhere to labor laws or otherwise mistreat foreign workers. Source country embassies also claim that Saudi courts automatically favor Saudis against foreigners, and that a Saudi sponsor can prevail against a foreigner by requesting innumerable delays in court hearings, refusing to pay penalties without facing any consequences, refusing to transfer a sponsorship, or delaying agreement to an exit visa. Source country embassies, on the other hand, often inadequately represent their nationals in labor disputes, due to fear of adverse impact on bilateral relations and continued employment of their nationals in the Kingdom.

In December 2007, the Arab News reported that the government also works with mosques to include TIP awareness in Friday sermons, reminding people of their Islamic duties concerning fair treatment of workers and encouraging them to treat servants kindly.

27B. The government monitors the flow of people into and out of the Kingdom. Entry and exit are controlled through visas. Entry is strictly denied to anyone without the proper visa. Anyone found in the country without a proper visa is deported. Law enforcement agencies screen the borders, often apprehending illegal entrants including people being smuggled in. Authorities are particularly vigilant about smuggled children, but have less ability to control the situation on the porous Yemen-Saudi border where many young trafficking

victims enter. The Saudis and some source-country governments have begun to require all visa applicants to be fingerprinted.

Despite their vigilance against human smuggling, there is little evidence that the Saudis actively look for potential trafficking victims along their borders. The vast majority of victims enter Saudi Arabia by legal means and personal choice, and become trafficked due to the actions of individual employers or recruitment agencies, making it difficult for border patrols to detect trafficking cases.

27C. The government coordinated an interagency committee to combat TIP, led by the Human Rights Commission, an independent agency reporting directly to the king. The establishment of this trafficking-specific committee is evidence of some level of commitment to fight trafficking and institutionalizes the issue within the government bureaucracy. Recent discussion of a comprehensive anti-trafficking law by various ministries indicates that a reasonable amount of internal coordination on this issue has taken place. It is not clear that a similar or routine mechanism exists for multi-lateral or international coordination. A November 19, 2008 article in Al-Watan newspaper following the visit of GTIP Ambassador Mark Lagon, reported that the President of the Human Rights Commission

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made clear the government is coordinating efforts to create a new anti-trafficking law with foreign missions, but did not elaborate on the process for doing so.

Regionally, the GCC has prepared a draft Unified Law for Eradication of Trafficking in Persons in the GCC in 2006, reflecting joint efforts by GCC countries to address TIP. The draft includes definitions similar to those adopted by the UN protocol on trafficking in persons; sanctions for various types of violations; and the formation of national committees for eradication of trafficking. The current status of this project is not clear.

Saudi Arabia and Yemen have a draft MOU and Plan of Action for joint efforts to combat TIP. UNICEF has indicated the Saudi-Yemen relationship could serve as a model for Saudi cooperation with other countries in combating TIP, but a high level of cooperation with other sending countries was not apparent. The Philippines threatened to stop the flow of workers to Saudi Arabia in 2008 in response to proposals to change the Saudi labor recruitment system.

27D. Government coordination on trafficking, which appears to be led by the Human Rights Commission, has been focused most recently on drafting a comprehensive anti-trafficking law that could serve as a national plan of action. The draft law cleared the Shura Council in November, 2008 and is now pending before the Council of Ministers. The Ministries of Labor, Interior, Justice, and Social Affairs, as well as the Human Rights Commission are all said to be involved with this legislation. It is not likely that any NGO's were involved in the process, except possibly the quasi-governmental National Society for Human Rights.

Separately, the Saudi government provided a document entitled "The Government of Saudi Arabia Facing the Challenge of Human Trafficking: Legal Frameworks, Preventative Measures, and Continued Commitments." The report outlines the legal frameworks, both domestic and international, that govern TIP issues and serves as a response to the 2005 U.S. State Department TIP report. This document is available in English. There is no evidence of a similar response since 2005.

27E. Saudi Arabia has not taken any discernible measures during the reporting period to reduce the demand for commercial sex acts. Saudi officials deny that commercial sex acts take place in the Kingdom as they are strictly forbidden

by Islamic Law.

27F. There is no evidence that Saudi Arabia has taken measures to reduce participation in international child sex tourism by its nationals.

27G. This question is not applicable to Saudi Arabia. The Kingdom did not contribute forces to international peacekeeping efforts during the reporting period.

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QUINN